

Message

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Sent: 10/16/2018 5:50:50 PM
To: Vandenberg, John [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=dcae2b98a04540fb8d099f9d4dead690-Vandenberg, John]; Sasser, Erika [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=477638fe84004800bdf8e62fe3cafc8-ESASSER]
Subject: RE: AIR POLLUTION: Standards too weak — evidence in draft EPA report -- Tuesday, October 16, 2018 -- www.eenews.net

Personal Matters / Ex. 6

-Aaron

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From: Vandenberg, John
Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2018 1:49 PM
To: Yeow, Aaron <Yeow.Aaron@epa.gov>; Sasser, Erika <Sasser.Erika@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: AIR POLLUTION: Standards too weak — evidence in draft EPA report -- Tuesday, October 16, 2018 -- www.eenews.net

Tony Cox indicated tentative Dec 12-13 meeting

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<https://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2018/10/16/stories/1060102671>

Standards too weak — evidence in draft EPA report

Sean Reilly, E&E News reporter
Published: Tuesday, October 16, 2018

AIR POLLUTION



Coal-fired power plants emit particulate matter and other pollutants. Pictured is the Cholla Power Plant near Joseph City, Ariz. Alan Stark/Flickr

EPA issued a new draft report acknowledging evidence that its current standards for airborne fine particulates are not tight enough to adequately protect public health.

A "causal relationship" exists between short-term exposure to fine particulates and the risk of premature death, according to the [draft report](#), formally known as an integrated science assessment.

EPA's current annual standard, set in 2012, is 12 micrograms per cubic meter of air. But the report notes that U.S. studies "indicate a linear relationship at levels as low as" 5 micrograms per cubic meter. Particularly vulnerable are children, based on "strong evidence of impaired lung function growth," and minorities, the draft adds.

Spanning almost 1,900 pages, the draft appears to have been posted online yesterday, but EPA press aides did not reply to an emailed request for confirmation. Its release marks a milestone in EPA's latest review of the national air quality standards for particulate matter, which are associated with an array of heart and lung ailments. While the draft stops short of making policy recommendations, it in effect offers a roundup of the scientific research to be considered in the review.

That review, required under the Clean Air Act, was launched with a workshop in 2015 and was originally supposed to conclude in 2021. But it has already fallen well behind that schedule; the draft report, for example, was originally scheduled for release in spring of last year.

In addition, EPA officials and an outside review panel known as the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee are now proceeding under new ground rules put in place in May by Scott Pruitt, then the agency's administrator. Those rules call for the review's completion late 2020; they also require the

committee, usually known by its acronym as CASAC, to examine potential "adverse" economic and energy effects that could result from changes to the standards (Greenwire, May 10).

Environmental and public health groups say that requirement could undercut efforts to strengthen air pollution limits. They also reacted with alarm last week when acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler fired what was in effect a CASAC subcommittee intended to add more scientific expertise to the review of the particulate matter standards.

An EPA spokesman has said that Wheeler's decision was consistent with the Clean Air Act and CASAC's charter. Wheeler last week also named five new members to the committee, the bulk of them from state and local regulatory agencies as opposed to the scientific research community.

The committee has tentatively scheduled a meeting for Dec. 12-13 in Washington, D.C., to consider the draft report, Chairman Tony Cox said in an email this morning.

Under the Clean Air Act, EPA is supposed to review the standards for particulate matter, ozone and four other common pollutants every five years, although the agency has hitherto rarely met that deadline.

The last review of the particulate matter thresholds wrapped up in 2012. At that time, EPA decided to cut the annual standard for fine particulates from 15 micrograms per cubic meter of air to 12 but left the 24-hour standard unchanged at 35 micrograms per cubic meter of air.

In the latest review, "any recommendations and advice for revisions will be developed through this and other meetings and discussions," Cox, a Denver-based consultant, said in the email, "and no decisions on them have yet been made."

Tina Bahadori
Director EPA/ORD/NCEA